



NATIONAL GUARD ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES

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March 19, 2003

The Honorable Tom Lantos
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman Lantos:

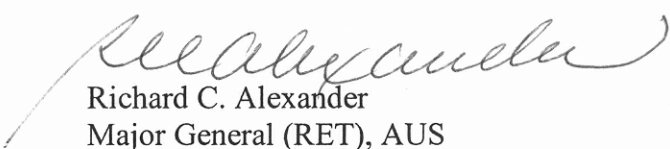
On behalf of the men and women of the National Guard Association of the United States, I would like to commend your efforts in introducing H.R. 1345, the "Equity for Reservists Pay Act of 2003."

Thousands of Guardsmen and women are currently being called to active duty in support of the ongoing operations in Iraq, supporting the Global War on Terrorism, defense of the homeland, in addition to the multitude of other state and federal operational missions normally performed. Many members of the National Guard are experiencing financial hardships when they serve their country for extended periods of time due to the difference of income between their civilian and military pay. H.R 1345 will help mitigate financial loss by making up the difference between a Guardsman's civilian and military salaries.

The employer credit provision of H.R. 1345 will encourage private industry to compensate their employees who are members of the National Guard. The high operations tempo is drawing Guardsmen and women away from their employers, sometimes with only a few hours of notice, for extended periods of time. These increased demands places additional financial burden on employers, to a much greater extent than in the past. Employers should not be expected to bear this increased burden. Assisting employers with a tax credit provides the ability to inject those funds back into their businesses in order to offset the effects of the temporary loss of their National Guard employees.

Again, I applaud you in your efforts. Your commitment to the National Guard and the military during times like these is greatly appreciated by the men and women who serve. As always, the NGAUS stands ready to assist you and looks forward to our continued relationship ensuring a strong and viable National Guard. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my staff or me.

Respectfully,



Richard C. Alexander
Major General (RET), AUS
President